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2012

PHOENIX

Literary and Arts Magazine

2012

VOLUME 36

The College of New Rochelle

Phoenix is the literary and arts magazine for the College of New Rochelle. Published in the spring of each academic year, this magazine showcases the artistic talents of the College of New Rochelle community. Prose, poetry, photography, and camera-ready images of other art forms are encouraged from students, faculty, staff and alumnae/i from all four schools. All advertising and submissions for next year's edition can be sent to:

Correspondence may be sent electronically to: ***phoenix@cnr.edu***

Phoenix Literary and Arts Magazine

The College of New Rochelle

29 Castle Place

New Rochelle, NY 10805

Cover Art: "Indomitable Spirit" by Kat Sayegh

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PHOENIX

Literary and Arts Magazine

VOLUME 36

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Dear Phoenix reader,

We are proud to present the latest installment of the literary and arts magazine of the spring 2012 year. The enclosed works showcase the creative faculties of students, staff, and alumnae/i of the college community. The human capability to endure the extremes of happiness and sorrow are expressed in both the written and visual works; they reveal the depth of the human experience.

We hope these works inspire in you a newfound appreciation for the complexity of life. As you sift through the pages, remember that challenges are many, but certainly not insurmountable.

We thank CNR Student Development, Dr. Nick Smart and anyone else who contributed to the magazine.

We wish you a pleasant reading,

Phoenix Staff



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“Dancing in all its forms cannot be excluded from the curriculum of all noble education; dancing with the feet, with ideas, with words, and, need I add that one must also be able to dance with the pen?”

~Friedrich Nietzsche

"The Joy of Food"

Gwendolyn Cahill

Food for thought

Food for life

Bitter sweet

Chocolate chips

Succulent juices abound

Sipping nectar in your car

Sometimes hard

Sometimes soft

Oozing down my chocolate kisses

Down your throat

Onto your stomach



Mr. Right Can't Take a Left

My belly sure is full

Full of life

From the food for life



Sitting on Orange

Gwendolyn Cahill

Honey juices full of game

Banana splits

Stand unpeeled

Waiting to be engorged

Into my succulent mouth

Dipping cherries

Do explode

And fill my mouth with
joy

Food for life

Food for thought

And nine will get you ten
Ten little fingers
To pick up grapes

Mash them into wine
Sip the glass upon the table
For it will bring you joy

Joy of laughter
Joy of time
Bubbles do a dance

Tickle time
Will do a rhyme
Strawberries on the
plate

A home run hit
You're sure to get
When doing
time with lime

Lime can climb
The side unscathed
And sit upon a glass

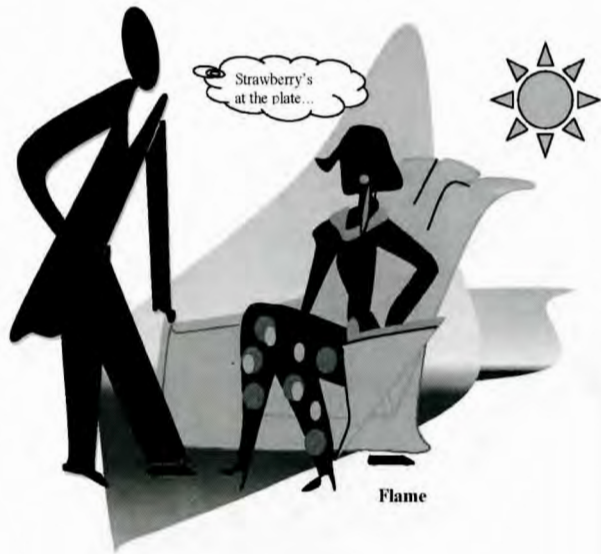
Pinched
And peeled
A perfect thrill
When sipping
rum and coke

Cherry coke
Cannot complete
For Pepsi in the thing

Fries are fine
But wings are hot
And legs will stand you up

Food for life
Food for thought

Mr. Right
Can't take a left
Without a plate of fries



Strawberry's at the Plate
Gwendolyn Cahill

"Earthly Savor"

Gene Green

Spices of the Earth,
The taste of fresh air
Spreading the aroma of life,
Branches of cinnamon,
Garnished along the land,
Sprouting flakes of dried pepper,
Blending in the wind,
Flavoring the world with
Boldness in one breeze.

Mother Nature in dread-
locks
Understands the
World in a peaceful state
Slowly, she closes her eyes
And meditates to the
sounds of nature

I am Mother Nature
Born in the sea of love

Drift
Into the potpourri scents
of sunshine
Inhale, exhale, and

"Mother Nature Knows"

Gwendolyn Cahill

The water runneth
Upon my bronze covered back
Beautiful tear drops of life
Splashed from the sea

I am Mother Nature
Born in the sea of life

Mother Nature in her dreadlocks
Swims in the sea of life
She knows love, peace, calm and
serenity

She drifts
Into the potpourri scents of
sunshine
Inhale, exhale, and breathe
The floral scents of nature

breathe
The floral scents of nature

A drop of rain chases
Mother Nature onto the gold
tossed shore
A drop of rain quietly bounces
back
Into the aquarium of life
Mother Nature smiles
As she hears the sounds of the
waves
Splashed upon the shore in the
distant
Mother Nature bows
As she graciously engulfs the
sounds of earths arising

I am Mother Nature
Born in the sea of life

Mother Nature dances on the
shore and smiles
As she captures a glimpse of her
Mandingo man
Standing in the distance
Pumped up chest of chiseled
iron, Dreadlock King

Mother Nature glides across the
Sands in her royal Egyptian gown
And reaches forth her hand to
her Mandingo man

A gentle kiss is quietly placed
Upon the lips of her Mandingo
man
And she quietly whispers in his
ear

I am Mother Nature

I am born in the sea of life
Come into my royal castle called
love...



My Mandingo Man
Gwendolyn Cahill

"City Peasant"

Diane Forte

I'm just a poor child,
A city peasant and my farm is
within
The city streets

I'm a starving child,
Surrounded by a harvest of bad
crop

Eagerly I scavenge around
Picking up the residue of long
gone
Forgotten...rotten fruit

I dust it off and cut away the
decaying part
And gingerly I prepare it for
ingestion

I'm the lowest of the low class
citizen
Not because I've done something
wrong,
But because I have the littlest of
little

Mistakes were made in a life
In one such as mine
I cannot give a reason... nor
Can I go back in time

I'm just a poor child,
A city peasant and my farm is
within

The city streets.

Hunger threatens as the harvest
is all devoured
What am I to do?
What am I to do?
When there is no more food to
be obtained
And
The rain...the rain,
It pours down washing away
Any wish to gain or attain
The slightest thought of reach-
ing a higher plain.

Yes! I am one who dared
To see if this country really
cared
So I get on welfare
Some say it's because I don't
want to
But...it's 'cause there is no will to

I want a break
Can you give me
Can you show me
Can you teach me
Can you take me to
A higher plain with greener
pastures
So that I can grow a new garden
with fresh ripe fruit

Until such
I'm just a city peasant and my
farm is within the city streets.



Oregon Trail, Scotts Bluff, NE by Helen Wolf

Untitled

Gene Green

This photo was taken by a friend of mine named Jordan Temprow. Our friendship dates back to the fifth grade when I first met him as this little boy filled with so much character. He became my best friend during our senior year in high school. After we graduated, he gave me this photo which was taken at a park in Poughkeepsie, NY. Now that we are both graduating from college this year, I am truly proud of how far both of us have come. Jordan believed in me when I did not believe in myself. This photo represents our everlasting friendship and love.



“Break of Dawn”

Tazmin H. Uddin

They say it is darkest before the
break of dawn

And so I stand in the midst of
the storm.

See the havoc that surrounds me,

Human on human atrocities

Other people's realities.

People pleading for an end

For them, death is their only
release,

In life, there exists no peace.

Syrian streets fill with bodies as

Homs calls out

to me,

800 women

have been raped

300 and count-

ing have been

killed.

Somalia's starv-

ing children

cover screens,

Families sepa-

rated by famine.

In Afghanistan,

A popula-

tion starves to

death,

16 bodies,

more than

books, have

been burnt.

Headline over headline.

My television remains un-
plugged,

But my heart has tuned in to
humanity.

We add up numbers.

Announce statistics.

Never think of who they represent.

Beautiful bodies with family,

name, love, heart, soul,

Now in death, still beautiful, but
cold, almost alone.

I've walked streets not my own,

Have seen the nightmares of this
world.



The Sprouting Nightmare by Cera Gonzalez,
Phoenix

I have seen little
sister's lifeless
eyes questioning
me,
Asking "why?"

I have stood
waiting to dry
tears,
Of little ones
whose hunger
has left them,
Without energy,
No tears fall
from their eyes,
for they are too
dry,
No strength to
complain.
Only curl into
little balls

Arms wrapped around them-
selves,
Waiting for some escape.

These realities exist
And though I try to resist
I have fallen, over and over
again.
I have knelt, have prayed
Have felt the cool floor on my
forehead,
That tranquility that has escaped
me.

These atrocities have left me



The Sprouting Nightmare by Cera Gonzalez,

Feeling empty
This earth trembles with anguish
My skies continue to mourn
My judgment grows cloudy,
This pain, makes my heart ache
My siblings,
My heart breaks.
Until I can take it no longer

And so,
I stand to fall,
And fall to pray,
And amidst the darkness,
I stand and wait,
Wait, for the new dawn to break.



Cathedral of St. Louis, MO by Helen Wolf

“Victory!”

Lisa Reynolds

Life's storms are raging,
Beyond my control
There is nothing in sight,
That I can physically hold
They shake me, and rock me,
And jerk me from side to side
Back and forth in spiral motion,
This nauseating ride
That I must go through,
This seemingly terrible ordeal
For it's not about me
Or the way that I feel
Lord how much more of this
Can I stand to bear?
As every crutch in my life

Suddenly disappears.

I've cried and cried,
Time and time again
Over these permitted and or-
dained storms
Which seem to have no end.
Lord what about a cool breeze?
Or a breath of fresh air
To refresh my tired, drained
soul?
From the heat of despair.

Then suddenly I remembered,
That rivers of living waters flow
Out of my worship experience
in Christ,
What I believe and what I know

The author of this story
Wrote this episode when,
He knew that I had enough
strength
To fight from within
Then He spanked the waves,
And silenced the hissing wind
Long enough, for me to receive
a word,

Before the next storm begins
Now victory is in the center of
my faith,
Challenging the things I see
Through Christ
I made it safe thus far,
No weapon formed shall over
take me.

“If What the Doctors Say is True”

Gene Green

If what the doctors say is true
She will not get any better
How do I keep my faith in you?

They say that she won't make it through
Well, can you write someone a letter?
If what the doctors say is true

Just give me the slightest clue
Let me seek refuge in your shelter
How do I keep my faith in you?

Their tests gave them an inside view
No one's opinions really matter
If what the doctors say is true

I swallowed all that I can chew
My thirst is now greater than ever
How do I keep my faith in you?

I can't bear it any longer, please answer soon
To doubt you, I thought never – But,
If what the doctors say is true
How do I keep my faith in you?

"The Ipod Song"

Rachelle LeBlanc

You've already won me over,
So I say a little prayer for you
Because I'm beautifully broken
When I'm tangled up in your
love;
I need a hero, you're my hero.

It's so cold between you and me
So save me from myself
Because my feelings show
And the little things lack oxygen,
As your magic makes me shiver,
So fall into me
So I can fall into you,
Because when I'm with you,
My broken wings are there for you.

Oh it's love; it must be love
Because you suffocate my fragile
heart
When you sang "you're body is a
wonderland"
And I called you my beautiful
disaster,
Because when you look me in
the eyes
You send me into a permanent
Monday
Just do me one thing now, stay
beautiful...from the littlest
things;

Now so you know, nobody till you
Has given me the symptoms like

the symptoms of you that I have
Over something never before.

But under my umbrella,
There's nothing left to lose
And I will crumble, at least one
in a million times,
When you're around;
And when you're around,
I'll wear the red dress you love
so much
While I sing your song, giving all
my baby love
To the wonder-wall of my heart,
And you said, "In her eyes you
can see,
That I must have done some-
thing right"
Yet I called myself ordinary,
But you called me a star and said
"come down to me,"
I smiled.

Now please stay close, don't go
When I'm half alive, broken, and
vulnerable,
And maybe when I'm awake,
You will sing me a lullaby
Like you said you valiantly would
sing the piano song to me;
But you're eternal in the stars
I see;
So I'll act right, for you I will,
Just to see you smile,
Because you're my angel
With that thing you do.

“Hidden Behind a Smile”

Nicole Best

Through my beautiful
smile I feel pain,
Past my whitened teeth
there is shame,
Through the friendly
smirk
I feel hurt,
Soaring through my
smiles
There are cries,
See past the happy
gestures I make,
The smiles I give are fake,
To cover all my aches.



Stippling Self-Portrait by Anna Predovan



Untitled by Gene Green

“A Queen”

Holly Bogardus

We all die. We can say we'll live forever; we can put things off or do them and say life's too short. We can fear it or embrace the idea of “rest”, but no matter our thoughts on the matter, it is the unfortunate inevitable. But how many of us really understand it, how many of us can really fathom not seeing, hearing, feeling, breathing? Alone, empty, in a cold box in the ground. We can put all our money, time, and effort into designing our own headstones, but in the end, all we get is a hole. A six-by-four foot hole. All we need is room enough to rest. Enough space for one person to lay and be no more. But what if I need more?

“Are you okay?” Tyler asks me with the deepest sorrow in his eyes and a sympathetic hand on my shoulder. Of course I'm alright, why wouldn't I be? I mean, I think I have a test I didn't study for, but why would he care about that? And so I smile and say I'm fine and continue on my path to the cafeteria.

It's there, as I walk in, that I feel a gravitational force I've never experienced before. All eyes turn to me with pained expressions. I don't understand. My feet speed up and I avert my eyes to the floor as I quickly rush through, grab food- although I can't remember what I took- and take my seat in the back corner of the café. I am soon joined by my best friends Rebecca and Alicia, closely followed by a short curly haired boy I had only seen in passing. As they sit down, they ask if I'm alright. At this point the world seems more shaky and alive than ever before. I nervously ask what has everyone so concerned for me. The curly haired boy, with an easy eagerness to tell the earth-shattering news, turns to me with a friendly face and explains that Matt had been hit by a car, and died before the helicopter could bring him to the hospital.

Matt, the boy I've known since kindergarten. The boy that used to laugh and tell me jokes to cheer me up. No, I had just seen him the other day, it was impossible. No.

In my first class I'm shown the newspaper clipping, which held a picture of my boyfriend Patrick's bike askew and bent, and a dented van. I ask why Patrick's bicycle is in the picture. The girl

beside me turns, looks me in the eyes and says, "He's dead too."

For the next hour I hear different stories of the event; one is dead and the other alive, then the opposite. I hear Patrick had been in the car that hit Matt. I hear that both had died last night. With tears in my eyes I run to the Guidance Counselor. I beg her to tell me what happened, if Patrick is alive. She ushers me into her office, smelling of fresh fruit and flowers that should not exist in the present state of chaos.

I sit alone in a chair, having friends and strangers alike put a hand on my shoulder, as if their stupid hands could fix anything. Everything is broken and Matt is dead and there is nothing they can do. Every smile sends a pang to my chest and every hand produces a tear in my eye.

Eventually the day ends, and I don't go home. I can't go home. It was all a blur. The only thing I remember is the Keane song *Somebody Only We Know* looping on repeat in my head. "I walked across an empty land/I knew the pathway like the back of my hand."

A door. Large and fading green with chipping paint across the uneven wood; it looks so daunting that I'm afraid to put my hand to it. What if I can't open it? What is waiting behind it? The mutilated face of the first and only boy I'd ever loved.

My small, pale fist makes contact with the door and it's like a ghost trying to make contact with a tangible world. After an eternity the door opens slowly and I see the shallow face of my boyfriend's mother. She doesn't remember me and ushers me in regardless.

The small living room of the apartment is filled with an assortment of the "less than favorable" youths of the town of Farmington. It's cramped and dimly lit, with the candles flickering and a smoky haze only adding to the sense of otherworldliness. I drift through the small apartment to Patrick's bedroom. I couldn't ask the mourners if they were here for Patrick or Matt. I had to go see for myself. I couldn't fathom what I would do if I didn't find him here. It would mean that he was gone. I walk through the tight hallway to the last room on the left. I pause, take a deep breathe, and step through the hole in the wall that served as the door to his room.

I find him lying in a small ball curled into himself.

He was alive. And for a moment, I felt happy. For just a moment, the world lit up and everything was going to be okay. But then I thought of Matt, and guilt filled me for my brief affair with joy, for forgetting him so soon. I approach Patrick. Easily half a foot taller than me, he looks so small, like an infant in his vulnerable state. He turns and in one movement pulls me down into the center of his small universe. Wrapped around me like I am the only thing tangible, so if he should let go, he might truly be alone. The words of the Keane song again ring through my ears, "Oh simple thing, where have you gone?/ I'm getting old and I need something to rely on/ so tell me when you're gonna let me in/ I'm getting tired and I

need somewhere to begin."

The sun goes down at a startlingly faster pace than normal, as if it is too tired and wishes to no longer be awake. Every new shadow in the room causes him to pull me closer, to reassure the fact that I am still here.

As the night progresses, I hear friends and mourners depart from the small apartment like birds from a cage and rejoin the larger world, a world I forgot exists. They must've



HELLO - THAR

images©

Jadore by Victoria Greene

forgotten us here, lost in their own grief, sealed in that emotional tomb meant to preserve their sanity. They're probably hugging and touching and patting and stroking and doing everything they can to find peace among each other, to cause movement and feeling and to assure each other that they were still alive.

We lie motionless in a vast darkness that separates us from them, the dim lighting and the still darkness of death. The people in the room are living, while we are dead. They must realize they can find no comfort here so they leave to find solace.

We stay. We cannot see each other and we dare not speak should our voices break and shatter the reverent peace we've found, together, away from the rest of the world.

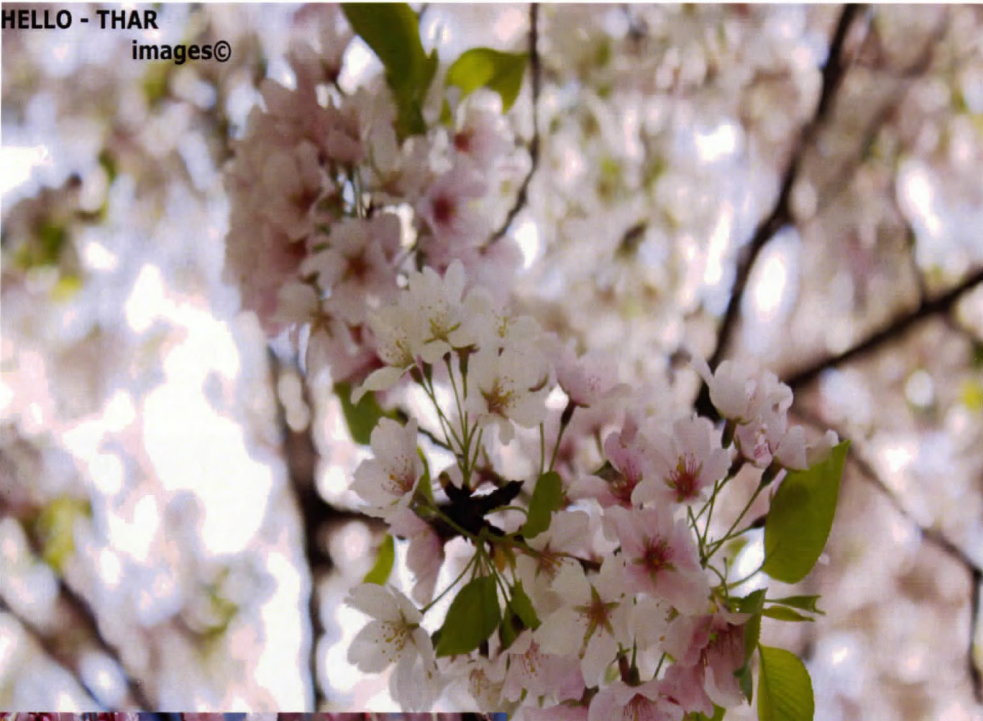
We create our own world. A place only we know, and ever will know. A world that, though small, is safe and warm and guarded from all the evils of the real world we were born into.

And within the cocoon we've made with our bodies, there lies hope. A hope and security that stays with us long after the sun rises, like Kean's song, "Somewhere Only We Know". "And if you have a minute why don't we go/ Talk about it somewhere only we know? / This could be the end of everything/ so why don't we go, somewhere only we know/ Somewhere only we know." We're creating a place only for us that, try as others might, will never find nor see. I've found that I need more than a six-by-four foot lot. I need a five-by-seven foot space. A queen sized bed, like the one we shared, so I will never have to rest alone. ■



Into The Woods by Rachelle LeBlanc

HELLO - THAR
images©



HELLO - THAR
in
images©



HELLO - THAR

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all Photos by Victoria Greene

“Track Marks”

Dorothy Valle

A sterile gurney
blinding lights expose
slashed abdomen,
brown body – red blood,
contrast white sheets.

Like icebergs, white
figures stare,
track marks -
arms, legs,
punctured veins
convey history.

Muffled remarks
through masks -
“Waste of time,
he’s not worth it.”

A nurse’s whis-
pered question -

“Did you hear
what they said?”
a faint reply,
“Yes.”

“Don’t pay them
any attention.
You are worth it,
and
God loves you.”

Transformation,
Rebirth,
Freedom – selling his

African Art on city streets
robbed, many times
for a hit - a score

Remembers – forgives
“I used to do that.”



*Untitled- part of the series, I am not
perfect but my body is.*

Tara Marie Tocci

"The Death"

Diane Forte

Silence... There is no more.
The two I lost,
The one I thought I wanted,
The other I thought I needed.

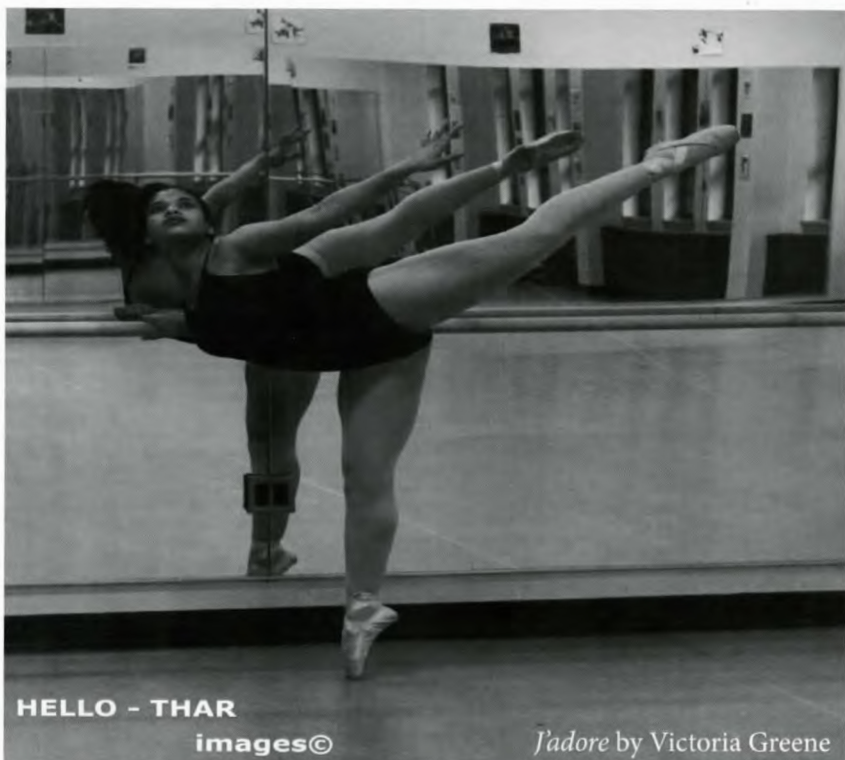
A hurt that followed,
An emptiness within,
The restlessness that was felt at night,
When the sky was in its darkest plight.

The knowledge I sought,
The strength I got,
The time, which passed,
Gave sustenance to being.

The memories, lingering around...
Like ghost in a mirror showing reflections of me.
In silence....there is no more Death.
Only the beginning of LIFE!



Mirrored Reflections Take Me Back to Paradise by Gwendolyn Cahill



"You Are"

Lisa Reynolds

You are...

The tone in a dissonant chord
A melody that makes my heart
sing

The sound of joy, unspeakable
joy

Leaves that gather on the
ground,
rustling.

You are...

The breath of life within me
The waves that embrace the sea

More than life itself
Bringing reality to dreams.

You are...

The movement of the wind
The indescribable flavor of rain
The colors of a rainbow
Undeniably, forever the same.

You are...

The fragrant aroma of true love
The sound of peace when I pray
The anchor attached to my soul
Brand new mercies everyday

Thou Art God!

“Freedom”

Nicole Best

Free like a bird
From pain and stress
Free like a bird
I only want the best
Free like a bird
To soar in the wind
Free like a bird
I'm destined to win
Free like a bird
With the world at my grasp
Free like a bird
This pain I cannot grasp
Free like a bird
High in the trees.
Free like a bird
Reach the stars if you believe
FREE LIKE A BIRD.



Crane Foundation-Baraboo, WI by Helen Wolf

"Absolute Connections"

Amelia Ellis

This piece is based on an idea presented in Plato's myth, Phaedrus. The extent to which I take on Plato's ideas is minimal, but I shall credit him as being the catalyst to this theory of the soul. To fully understand what is being presented, one must use faith and every romantic tendency he or she may have.

The falling of souls in Plato's Phaedrus is the falling of souls belonging to heavenly beings, but allow me to take Plato's depiction of what perfect souls appear to be in his myth and apply them to real things. Heavenly beings are not winged charioteers; they are not the parts of a whole. Heavenly beings are the whole in one form, one self-connected entity where horse and chariot and winged rider compose an electric, perfect, complete sphere of energy. When heavenly beings meet, their energy, so shocking, fiery and electric, bonds with its compatible charge; the heavens are created when all heavenly beings connect their energy, and divine electricity forms an invisible atmosphere of perfection: God. God, the supreme being that is worshipped, that doctrines of faith wish to please and men desire to speak to; a God that a soul may wish to spend eternity with; a God which one hopes to become in mind and soul.

The soul of the human being is created in the likeness of God, but is not a part of the completeness of God, therefore making him imperfect. When imperfections arise in the energy of the God atmosphere, when a spark becomes impure or has one moment of irregular static energy, the spheres of imperfect energy fall from their bonds to the lonely earth below. This creates a chain reaction. A neighboring divine energy is no longer stable, it falls, and this continues. Energy cannot be destroyed, only manifested and manipulated into other substances; the fallen energy is recycled; it becomes trapped inside flesh or material, and becomes the human soul of the being. Too passionate and animalistic to be peaceful, too esoteric and questioning to be satisfied, the soul goes through trial and suffering, putting himself through experiences in which he may once again feel the electric connection and perfection for just a mere moment, but hardly does it ever learn permanence, and

hardly does the soul ever leave the human body untainted. But all imperfections wish to return to the parts that make them perfect; all souls wish to return to one another, seeking a way in which it can learn, in which it may connect, in which it may rid the loneliness of a lost bond due to dysfunction of such uncontrollable brilliance.

Feeling loneliness, and emptiness, feeling the imperfections of

itself, the soul finds solace in earthly vices to soothe mental anxiety and physical pains. It grows dark and disillusioned when attempts to connect once again to God fail; it becomes frustrated when imperfection stunts growth. And so the body dies, but the electrical soul, unsatisfied, but lonely enough to try again, manifests itself in whatever it feels a new connection with. The travels of the soul, of old energy, is reflected in the physical appearance, in the eyes of the carrier; the soul brings its baggage, and its darkness. The darker the soul, the darker the initial condition



Untitled by Genevieve Fleckenstein

of the human being it inhabits, but the happier the soul, the cleaner the human being starts. But being an imperfect energy, so involved in the individual's own way to God, the soul forgets its origins, its original connection, the original substance that created the God it came from. The soul forgets its fellow soul. The soul becomes selfish in his desperation. This allows him to go throughout life hurting, damaging, and further decreasing not only its own, but others' chances of perfection and divine connectivity.

This electricity, the energy that moves our bodies, it grows the grass and the trees. It fuels animals to breed, to kill, but it also fuels the soul to love and believe in a concept that allows it to search pas-

sionately for its missing bond among human beings. Traveling the Earth for 10,000 years in an uncomfortable peace, always knowing something is missing but never knowing what, souls thirst after perfection and connection, of their soul-mate. With a soul-mate, perhaps the perfect bond that originated between the two souls shall allow for the healing of damage done by years of lonely suffering. Now they have found their connection, and the two of them shall be released from earthly ties; the dysfunction of their energy will disappear; they will be lifted back into God and return to perfection. Yet the lifting up of the soul shall never happen until all humans have at once found their original connection and have found ultimate peace. A soul traveling for 10,000 years may reach its original bond, but it must wait for the rest of humanity to do so as well for it takes the whole in order to become whole again; it requires every piece of the heavenly puzzle to be put in place. Because of the sporadic nature of energy, place nor time can be perfectly synced in order to assure a run in with compatible energy. But every now and then the connection between souls is made known.

Think to yourself...have you ever spoken to someone and immediately felt the spark, a jolt, as if being awakened? Have you ever felt another's pain so deeply that you too have cried? Have you ever shared a moment of happiness or excitement with another? These are instances of divine electrical connection. Some souls thrive on these instances, and learn to love the other as if they were the original bond to temporarily satisfy a need. But to find an original bond is rare. To know not only in the flesh and mind, but in the soul and blood that the energy of the other had once been a part of you; to feel the tingling sensations, not just of arousal, but of a cosmic hand; to look one in the eyes and see yourself in the past connected to that individual, is to find your original soul-mate. It is absolute connection.

In absolute connection not just one, but two souls will be satisfied to wait with one another while the others find their way. By never giving up on love, the soul never gives up its chances of perfection. But by inflicting injustice to each other, to damage a part of the God from whence we came is to prevent not just one, but millions of souls' peace. ■

"You Special and You Know It"

By Sibby Bonilla

Something ain't wrong when you say yes.

It isn't bad to walk around and smile.

Smile for a change, give you something to feel.

Don't take no hound dog to realize that.

You special and you know it.

Grab yourself a heart and take it.

Run off into the sun.

Let the hotness shine on your face.

See the change and become that and more.

You special and you know it.

Dance and sing all over.

Ignore everything and enjoy.

Sleep with dreams, with the stars and the moon.

You Special and you know it.

Crave to climb and walk.

It may take miles and more running.

Keep going and never stop.

Pray 'cause it's all you've got.

You special and you know it.

If you cry don't worry.

Other days come to rescue you.

Pick up your chin and smile baby.

Feel that crisp sun again...go on.

You special and you know it.

Read and write, never let it go.

This is an inner voice.

Don't be scared, keep feeling that sun.

Keep singing and dancing.

You special and you know it.



But A Rose by Rachelle LeBlanc

“Shackles of Liberty”

Tazmin H. Uddin

I pledge allegiance to the flag
Waving above a nation under
surveillance
With justice and liberty for some
We're still waiting for that change
to come.

We're taking it from the tweets to
the streets

Agenda written with every play
in mind
Only those who search, truth will
find.

And so they speak with conviction
Slippery words creating a diversion
Turning eyes away from abuses
Band-aid solutions the public
always chooses.



You Can't Have Two Without 6, 8, 10 by Pash'a El

For the sake of liberty they
shackle our feet
And though the Constitution
feels neglected
The people must be protected.

As politicians put on the mask
Prepared to get dirty to finish
the task

So we're taking it from the tweets
to the streets
For the sake of liberty they
shackle our feet
And though the Constitution
feels neglected
The people must be protected.

The Statue's hopes remain
unspoken
And like the bell, Liberty's promise
has been broken
You smile with sincerity
But beware, that's been labeled
"criminal activity".

Noting what you see and who
you meet
The times you pray and where
you eat

feels neglected
The people must be protected.

There exists a reality beyond
what you see
To live in fear is to be free
They know what they're doing is
idiotic
And that's why speaking truth is
unpatriotic.

Small Change by Rachelle LeBlanc



What you speak and what you hear
All that makes your "you"
disappear.

So we're taking it from the tweets
to the streets
For the sake of liberty they
shackle our feet
And though the Constitution

For justice we're taking it from
the tweets to the streets
Breaking the shackles they've
placed on our feet
Making sure the Constitution is
once more respected
We, the people, will not be
neglected.

“A View of Abu Ghraib”

Christine Williams

Fernando Botero is a 20th century painter and sculptor. He created a collection called “Abu Ghraib” that draws attentions to man’s inhumanity. The depiction of the victimized body is representative of the abuse committed by American troops to Iraqis at the Abu Ghraib prison. Like all artists, he creates a visual record of people, places and events, and captures the horror of a specific event in history. Artists like Botero help to see the world in a different light. He “makes visible what is invisible” (Moody).

In the “Abu Ghraib” collection, Botero places an importance on the inhumanity of mankind. He visually draws attention to the subject matter by creating a distorted scale that depicts figures as larger than life. His subjects refer overtly to the relationship between American troops and Iraqi prisoners in Abu Ghraib. Though the figures are large and plump, they show great sturdiness, strength and endurance.

Power is a significant theme throughout the works and it is explored in the relationship between the violated and violator. The violated, despite being in a vulnerable position, show great endurance and strength. According to Kuspit, the victimized are perhaps models of the Roman figure Hercules. Like the victims in Botero’s art, Hercules has girth and strength and symbolizes fortitude (Kuspit). These characteristics are captured within the victims. The victimized portray invulnerableness, despite the pain of the torture depicted.

Though there is a clear representation of the American torture of the Iraqis, there may be alternate associations in Botero’s art. It’s possible that Botero uses Christian iconography in his art. Kuspit observes undertones of Christ’s persecution within the art. The cruelty exemplified in the art depicts violence that attempts to break a man spiritually and physically, like that of the cruelty used to attempt to break Christ. Like Christ, the violated remain intact spiritually and physically despite the torture endured. The prison

cell of the victims is suggestive of the prison cell Christ was also kept and tortured in.

Botero makes great use of light throughout his artwork. With light, he brings important objects to the forefront while shadowing unimportant ones. There is also light on the prison bars, drawing attention to the imprisonment. It is also used to give the appearance of objects being further away. Bags used to cover the

Abu Ghraib-9 by Fernando Botero



prisoners' head were used historically in hanging victims. Light is used and manipulated by artists, such as Botero, to create spatial relationships, scale and proportion. It creates an illusion of 3-dimensionality on a 2-dimensional surface. Through light, it is shown that the victim and victimizer are close, whereas the prison bars are far away. The light and shape used on the bars are different. Light shed on the 3-dimensional bars on the left make them appear closer while the ones on the right are unlit and only appear as flat lines. This creates the illusion of the bars on the left being close and the bars on the right being far away. Hatching is also a way artists such as Botero play with light. Botero uses hatching on the victim to create the illusion of dark marks on his body, exemplifying bruises. The light and dark he uses draw the eye to the important objects within the art by emphasizing the focal point.

Color is used symbolically in Botero's art. Sayre states the color red as symbols of death, anger, or blood in a time of war (Sayre, p. 120). In Botero's art, red is the only color used, and it captures the symbolism of blood and anger directly. The purity and brightness of the red shows intensity.

Through visuals, people create and perceive conclusions about the world. People decide what is important and what is unimportant visually. Through the use of light and color, Botero shows the viewer what's important in his art. He simplifies the work of the viewer's perception by assisting the rejection, organization, discrimination, association, classification, analyzation, and construction of the subject matter. Botero visually communicates what he sees in the world to the average person who might be unaware of it. "The eye mirrors each individual's complex perception of the world" (Sayre, p. 16). He perceives the world with his eyes and allows others to see it through his art with their own eyes.

In Botero's "Abu Ghraib" collection, the inhumanity of mankind is artfully presented. The victimization of the prisoners has various connotations. Botero captures an event in this art and shares it with the observer. He visually brings to light the torture of Iraqis by American troops. ■



“Love Letter”

Nacre Coleman

Dear Anonymous,

I know it's so sudden but I know it's something different. I can't really explain it. I can't breathe when I'm around you...my heart skips a beat. I feel like something is wrong with me. Then I feel like you're afraid of me. Even though you've called me beautiful, it feels as if I'm a monster because you can't stand to look at me.

We quickly glance

at each other, not to make it seem obvious and that was all. I don't even know how to talk to you anymore. Now I'm scared. I was just excited and now I'm afraid that you were lying to me. I'm afraid that you no longer feel for me as you once did. Did I scare you? Did I ask too many questions? Was I annoying? Am I annoying and childish? I'm sorry; I'm so sorry. I want you to get butterflies when you look at me or hear my voice like I do. I want you to show me that you appreciate me. Stop being afraid! Say something...Say Something... ANYTHING!!! Please, just talk to me, explain it to me slowly. Let me know how you feel. I'm begging you PLEASE!! I'm not too sure if this is too soon but I think I love you. I want you in my life, I want you to want me, hold me, kiss me, tease me, treat me like the queen that you told me I am. Please.

Sincerely,

Anonymous

**"Breaking up,
Reason #1"**

Grace Simons

Stroke me with
your unknown
fingers.
Tell my ears and
eyes that
all the pain,
the love
is worth those
instances in which
you
indulge in the hu-
man instinct to
forgo the neces-
sary healing of
your eternal, fallen
soul.

Forgive the cracks your rotting
oil seeps through,
for the imperfections you decide
to keep with you;
for all the confusion and hatred,
was not planned;
untimely,
a lie to your purpose you must
carry around
like Evil and his existence
on this earth.

I do not know you.

I do not know your caress with
unknown fingers.



Eyeshadow Dream by Genevieve Fleckenstein

They are scarring me,
while filling me with your
sticky impurity.

And
I am the piece that has broken
from the puzzle.
You are the piece that has bro-
ken from the puzzle.
Together we promised to be
broken.
But I see the broken you keep
is the broken of this world
and I will not be part of that
injustice.

What event has made the greatest impact on your life?

Shakera Bramwell

Every Saturday afternoon my mother would order me to sit on our 100-square-foot, bare concrete floor to practice my spelling. "Spell sister!" she would yell menacingly. Nursing the welts on my arm she gave to me for misspelling "brother," I uttered the letters trembling, "S-I-S-T-..." Everyone in the lane would hear it was time for my lessons. My grandmother would come running across the street; "leave the poor child alone," she would plead and offered me fortification behind her back. Amidst the turmoil, warfare and ignorance in the lane, and being uneducated herself, it is very strange to me that my mother took three to four hours a day to reinforce my schooling. The welts on my arm and buttocks disappeared eventually, but the tenacity and time she invested in my education later manifested itself in my own character. My mother was there to nurture me through six years of my life, before she was murdered at gunpoint on our front step at 2:00 am in the morning while her three children slept a foot away.

I passed the first ten years of my existence dweller to a street dubbed 'Mongoose-Town'. To this day I have no idea where it was I really lived but it was the only street I knew. A narrow street about a mile long, it separated into crossroads, parting two warring neighborhoods. I can't say you would find the better of two evils traveling in either direction. In the lane lived about 20 distinctly different families. I would think they all were poor, as it couldn't have been their choice to live in a community among other cruel, sadistic people such as themselves. I argue this because many lived rather lavish lifestyles among us in the ghetto. They drove fancy cars, wore fancy clothes, traveled back and forth to the states and built fancy houses. They did this all the while living in the ghetto where we often went days even weeks without access to water and electricity. But for the most part, in this community, like many found in my country, lived people who were simply poor, ill equipped, uneducated and lacking in wherewithal to relocate. I believed there to have been residents who had the means to relocate, but fell victims to the small benefits of living in the ghetto; public cable, electricity, and water.

I can't imagine these so called benefits causing one to forget the many sleepless nights, which was every other night, when zinc fences and rooftops creaked from the neighboring ganglord's henchmen seeking out sons to murder and daughters to rape; having only just fallen asleep after hours of brooding, wrestling with

Haunted Eye by Shiyon Mathew



yourself about whether it was safer to sleep with the lights on or off, under or on the bed, or not sleep at all. Better to sleep in the dark than with the lights on, you decided apprehensively, because even though with the lights on you could see the killer when he comes and make for a quicker escape— if you escape at all— the killer would be

able to see you too, and the chances of you bumping into the killer while escaping in the dark was far less likely. Barely asleep, only to be awoken panicked stricken at 4 am at the smell of gasoline being thrown against the age old, lifelong, sun-drenched scrap wood holding up the zinc roof; which would be all the evidence left of your existence in the morning. That's how my family also went; my sister, me, my great-grandmother, grandmother, grand aunt, all 5 aunts, 4 uncles, and their children. That's how we would have gone only a day after my mother was murdered—our ashes to be placed beside my mother's dead body.

When my mother died I was taken under the care of my grandmother, who herself was uneducated, a middle school dropout. She, like my mother, would make sure I remained dedicated to my

schooling. She would make sure I did my homework every day, and though she was never able to help me actively, she would madden my aunts and uncles to my side. Four years after my mother's death, my grandmother passed away from HIV Aids, a common disease that her doctors managed to misdiagnose. When my grandmother fell ill, the seemingly comfortable world I had lived in – compared to most of the other kids I knew who didn't have as Jamaicans would say “a pot to piss in,” or didn't know whether they were going to eat or have a place to lay their heads on certain nights—fell apart. Granted there were times when I too shared those worries, but I had better days than most.

At age 11, having always been a worrying child, ill-fatedly preoccupied with the worries and pains of others, when none of my grandmother's nine children cared to wash her soiled clothes, I did it. I sat on a rock with a 10 gallon pail between my legs and bleached her colored clothes white and bleached her whites literally to pieces. Of those months, all that was left was the stark contrast between the complexion of my hands (having been bleached) and the rest of my body. I didn't know how to wash, nor did I have the robust to and fro hand movement needed to actually wash the clothes, so I bleached them instead. Most afternoons after I came from school and finished playing with friends— running on the cracked pavement outside, mounting sharp edged zinc fences, and running away from dogs after stealing over neighbors' fences to climb their fruit trees where I swung from limb to limb— I would set myself to the task of washing my grandmother's clothes. The bleach would sting the scars I got from that afternoon playtime. When my youngest aunt ran the street chasing the “love” that most Jamaican girls unfortunately found when a guy slides his undeserving, easily-distracted, and flighty penis in their vagina and spot them a few hundred after, instead of letting my sister, my grandmother and I go hungry, I burnt rice and canned mackerel.

I will never forget having to go to the clinic to get tested for AIDs, having unknowingly lived with, bathed, dressed and eaten with my AIDs afflicted grandmother for months. While traveling the 3 miles to the clinic on foot, maddening thoughts crossed my mind like heavy fingers pulling on a guitar string. That day walk-

ing to the clinic recalling my stinging scars, I thought I was done for sure, half wanting to turn around fearing that while washing my grandmother's clothes her excrements could have found my scars and infected me too.

When I tell people in America I come from Jamaica, I always get the same response. Well mostly from those who have never lived there. They smile, and say, "Wow, it's so beautiful there." And I know that they are thinking of shades of blue and green. They imagine or reminisce sitting by the ocean, a cool breeze blowing on their faces, and throwing their heads back to the sound of rainbow colored, cello-playing birds and clear skies. I smirk and deep down a need would overcome me to drag them to my Jamaica.

Can you believe I've never seen one of those rainbow-colored birds, never sat by the ocean? There is no place on the island that is farther than 50 miles away from the sea, and I've only visited the ocean twice in my entire 11 years of living there. I can't swim to save my life. I did however meet blue skies each day I left my house. I met red at my doorstep, and some of the time it wasn't blood. Jamaica is filled with violence because uneducated and educated poor people have no opportunities to further themselves.

My grandmother had nine kids, five girls and four boys, not including my orphan sister and me. Currently six are alive; five of whom are hiding from revengeful ganglords in Jamaica and, of the five, one is a ganglord, my eldest uncle. Another is an illegal immigrant in America. Three were murdered. My mother was the first to go, gunned down on her doorstep in front of her children. My second eldest uncle, a high school graduate fluent in Spanish and accounting, turned gang lord, driven mad by power and unfulfilled ambitions, was gunned down in his shanty by one of my distant uncles. The youngest of my uncles was shot in front of four of his nephews and nieces. Contrary to what our tourism industry advertises, my Jamaica is a cold place.

As a kid, I always showed heavy interest in books and my studies. The imaginative fiction carried me away from Jamaica, into a world where the cat got out of the hat, Huckleberry Finn was trying to find his way home, and Harry Potter was looking for the Sorcerer's stone. Through reading, I managed to escape the lane for short

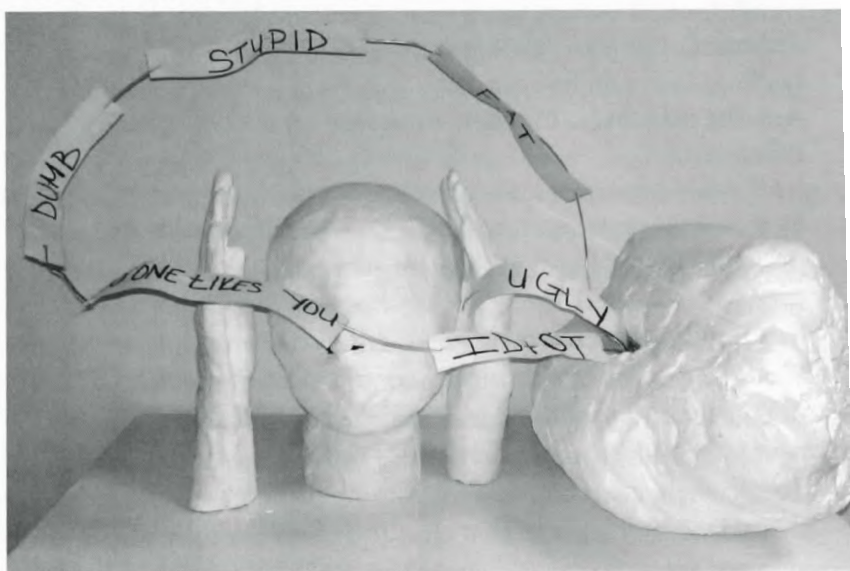
times. Around me was much turmoil, caused by violence, poverty and most of all fear. Reading truly opened up my world. Through reading, I went on investigations with Nancy Drew. I ran amuck with the Babysitter's Club and overcame my fears with the Goose Bump team.

I like to think that my success in life is because I was marshaled by my mother's whip ready, pensively and passionately seeking out the letters for the words to chapters of my life. It was my mother who taught me to read. Therefore, it was my mother who gave me the freedom to not only travel in a mental state with the stories that I indulged in, but to physically travel out of my Jamaica. It was my mother who instilled in me the importance of education because, unlike the ganglords who walked the streets of Jamaica or anywhere else believing that killing someone would bring them success, I learned that education was the only way to true success. Yet, it is amazing that though reading didn't put food on the table, my mother still made sure I read. She saw beyond the meagerness that was her life, stooping below her true potential and getting forever trapped there just to put food on our table. She saw more for me. The event in question: my time spent with my mother, crying on cold floors spelling S-I-S-T-E-R.



For Those Who Grow in the Darkness by Cera Gonzalez

Hear No Exit by Pash'a Ellis



Haunted by the Cracks by Shiyon Matho





Something So Right

Lisa Reynolds

There's never a dull moment
While living in Christ
Every turn of event
Brings you closer to the light
Of understanding God's perfect will
For an imperfect life
Something so wonderful!
Something so right!
He created the puzzle,
Of His own perfect plan
Every intricate piece
In the palm of His hand
A vision of what shall be
He sees with infinite sight
Always
Something so wonderful!
Something so right!



Photos by Victoria Greene

Phoenix Literary Magazine presents:

The Phoenix Speaks

Essays and reactions of The College of New Rochelle

"A phoenix from the fire, an idea from the reincarnation..."



This bimonthly spin-off of the annual literary magazine, Phoenix, allows students, faculty and staff to present their philosophical, avant garde ideas to the college community in essay format in hopes of generating safe and intellectual discussion at The College of New Rochelle.

Every two months the Phoenix board will choose one of the submitted essays, and publish the idea in a pamphlet available around campus for free reading. Responses to the idea shall be accepted after the publication of the topic, and until the end of the month.

The Phoenix Speaks will then be published containing the original essay and its responses, and distributed on campus.

Anyone in the CNR community can contribute, and those who wish to remain anonymous shall stay anonymous.

Let's get this started! Please send your essay to Phoenix@cnr.edu!

*“Life beats down and crushes the soul, and art
reminds you that you have one.”*

– Stella Adler